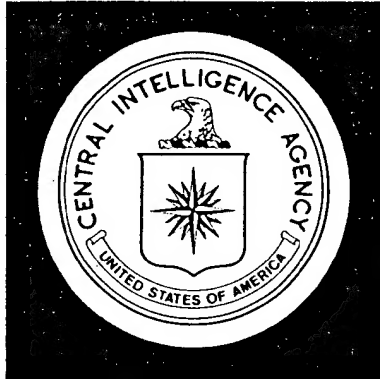


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1998



Intelligence Report

*Soviet General Purpose Naval Deployments
Outside Home Waters: Characteristics and Trends*

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June 1973

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June 1973

**Soviet General Purpose Naval Deployments
Outside Home Waters: Characteristics and Trends**

Deployments of Soviet general purpose naval forces outside home waters grew fivefold between 1965 and 1970 and were extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters. Since 1970 Soviet ships have not deployed to any new major areas. The time they spend away from their local fleet operating areas appears to be leveling off.

The current stabilizing trend may reflect fiscal and logistic constraints on routine naval deployments. Furthermore, analysis of Soviet construction programs, Soviet statements on deployments outside home waters, and foreign basing possibilities indicates that any increases in routine Soviet naval deployments to distant areas during the next few years will be gradual and limited. Recent contingency deployments, however, indicate that the Soviets may keep some forces in readiness for nonroutine operations in distant waters.

The Soviet Navy's general purpose missions fall into two general categories: defense of the USSR against Western naval forces and extension of Soviet political influence. Soviet naval activity in the Norwegian Sea, Mediterranean Sea, and northwestern Pacific Ocean reflects an orientation toward anti-navy missions. The USSR's newest and best armed ships usually operate in these areas. In contrast, the small Soviet task groups routinely assigned to waters more distant from the USSR—the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters—are tailored primarily for political roles and have lesser military capabilities.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
June 1973

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Soviet General Purpose Naval Deployments
Outside Home Waters: Characteristics and Trends

The Report in Brief

The scope of deployments of Soviet general purpose naval forces outside home waters expanded steadily during the late Sixties and drew world attention to the Soviet Navy. Prior to 1964 ships of the Soviet Navy infrequently ventured outside their home waters. A policy statement by the commander in chief of the Soviet Navy in 1964 placed unprecedented stress on the conduct of long cruises and marked the beginning of more extensive deployments.

Between 1965 and 1970 these deployments grew five-fold and were extended into the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters. The overall rate of growth of Soviet naval activity outside home waters appears to be leveling off. The chief exception is the increase in the Indian Ocean brought about by the harbor clearing activity in Bangladesh.

The current stabilizing trend may reflect fiscal and logistic constraints on routine naval deployments. A propagandized 1972 pledge of a Northern Fleet submarine crew to save state funds through operating economy reflects a Soviet consciousness that financial and material resources for fleet operations are limited. Slumps in routine out-of-area operating levels following periods of unexpectedly high naval activity

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indicate that the availability of ships for deployment may constrain Soviet general purpose force operations. Also indicative of pressures for economy of ship usage are the Soviet practices of reassigning units already deployed and varying the time of force rotations to meet unexpected requirements for naval forces in distant areas.

Logistic shortcomings resulting from the design features of Soviet combatants, the small number of major auxiliary ships, and a lack of worldwide basing facilities also place constraints on the level of operations. Deployed Soviet naval forces maintain a low level of activity, however, which creates only modest needs for resupply of fuel, spare parts, and munitions and minimizes maintenance requirements.

The missions of the Soviet Navy's general purpose forces fall into two general categories: defense of the USSR against Western naval forces and the extension of Soviet political influence. Soviet naval activity in the Norwegian and Mediterranean Seas and the northwestern Pacific Ocean reflects an orientation toward anti-navy missions. The USSR's newest and best armed ships usually operate in these areas. In contrast, the small Soviet task groups routinely assigned to waters more distant from the USSR--the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters--are tailored primarily for political roles and have lesser military capabilities.

Analysis of Soviet construction programs, foreign basing possibilities, statements, and naval constraints indicates that any increases in routine Soviet naval deployments to distant areas during the next few years will be gradual and limited. Recent contingency deployments, however, indicate that the Soviets keep some general purpose forces in readiness for nonroutine operations.

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Contents

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| Evolution of Naval Activity | 5 |
| Naval Activity Prior to 1965 | 5 |
| Growth: 1965-1970 | 6 |
| Period of Stabilization: 1971-1972 | 8 |
| Soviet Naval Objectives | 8 |
| Defense Against Western Navies | 9 |
| Extension of Political Influence | 12 |
| Indian Ocean | 12 |
| Caribbean Sea | 13 |
| West Africa | 15 |
| Limitations on Routine Activity Outside | |
| Soviet Home Waters | 16 |
| Economic Restrictions | 16 |
| Logistic Support Limitations | 16 |
| Operational Reflections of Resource | |
| Limitations | 18 |
| Quick-Response Capabilities | 19 |
| Outlook | 21 |
| Newer Ships | 21 |
| Limited Shore Support | 22 |
| Continued Political Missions in | |
| Distant Areas | 22 |
| Annex: Soviet General Purpose Naval Force | |
| Deployments Outside Home Waters, 1965-1972 . . . | 24 |

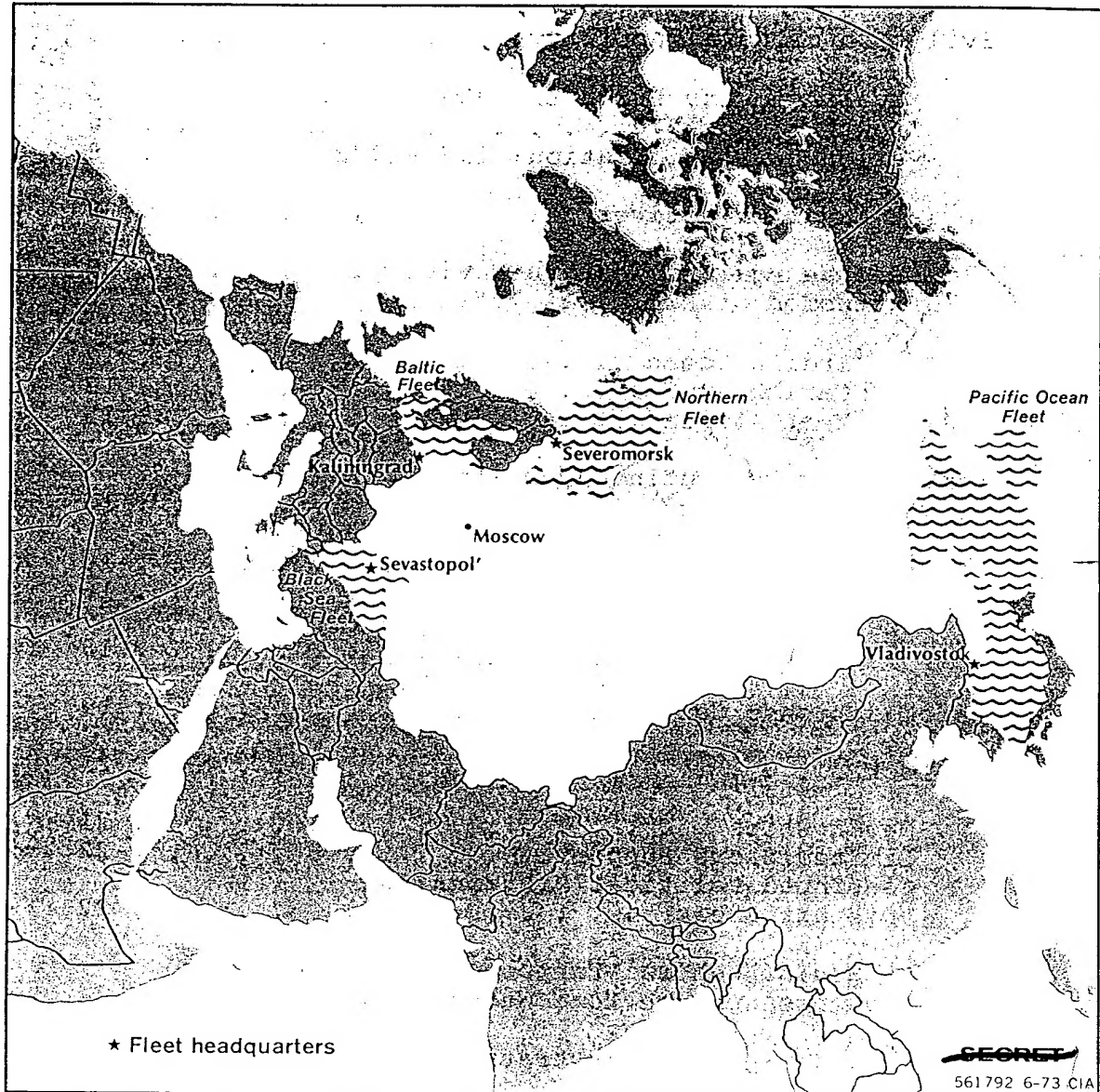
Illustrations

| | |
|---|---|
| Soviet Fleet Home Waters (<i>Map</i>) | 4 |
| Operations of Soviet General Purpose | |
| Naval Forces Outside Home Waters (<i>Chart</i>) | 7 |

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Soviet Fleet Home Waters



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Evolution of Naval Activity

Naval Activity Prior to 1965

The first recorded Soviet naval activity outside fleet home waters after World War II occurred in 1953, when ships of the Soviet Navy participated in a coronation fleet review in England. In the Fifties some 20 "show" visits were made to foreign ports. These visits were typically conducted by a Sverdlov class light cruiser accompanied by three or four destroyers, and most were to European countries.

Soviet naval exercises throughout the greater part of the Fifties were confined to home waters (*see map at left*) and were focused on the defense of these areas from opposing surface forces. The first known Soviet submarine patrol outside home waters took place in 1955, when a Northern Fleet unit operated briefly in the Norwegian Sea. A submarine of the Pacific Ocean Fleet operated in the Bering Sea in 1956, the first known out-of-area deployment by a unit of that fleet. These submarine deployments increased gradually through the Fifties until patrols in the northwestern Pacific and Norwegian Sea became nearly continuous.

In 1958 the Soviets extended the exercise activity of their Northern and Baltic Fleets into the Norwegian Sea and employed submarines in simulated attacks on surface targets. The Pacific Ocean Fleet conducted similar exercises beginning in the mid-Fifties, but ships involved in them rarely ventured outside the Sea of Japan or Sea of Okhotsk.

The Soviets made their first attempt at basing naval units outside areas contiguous to the USSR in 1958 when a squadron of medium-range diesel-powered attack submarines was based in Albania, thereby moving the first line of Black Sea naval defenses forward from the Bosphorus into the eastern Mediterranean. The Albania squadron, numbering up to 12 units, was maintained until 1961, when an ideological split between Albania and the USSR caused its removal.

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Two events in 1964, perhaps in recognition of Soviet naval shortcomings in the Cuban missile crisis, marked the beginning of more extensive naval deployments. One was a policy statement by the commander in chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Gorshkov, outlining the training objectives of the Navy with unprecedented stress on the conduct of long voyages. The other was the deployment of a small force of surface ships and submarines to the Mediterranean Sea. This force was the forerunner of the USSR's first continuous naval presence outside its four fleet operating areas.

Growth: 1965-1970

The magnitude of Soviet deployments outside home waters changed markedly from 1965 to 1970. Soviet naval activity increased at an average rate of 42 percent per year as ship operating days rose from roughly 6,100 in 1965 to over 35,600 in 1970.* This increase reflected the growth of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, particularly after the Arab-Israeli War in 1967; the initiation of operations in the Indian Ocean in 1968; and more extensive worldwide exercise activity, including Exercise Ocean, which directly involved over 200 Soviet ships in 1970.

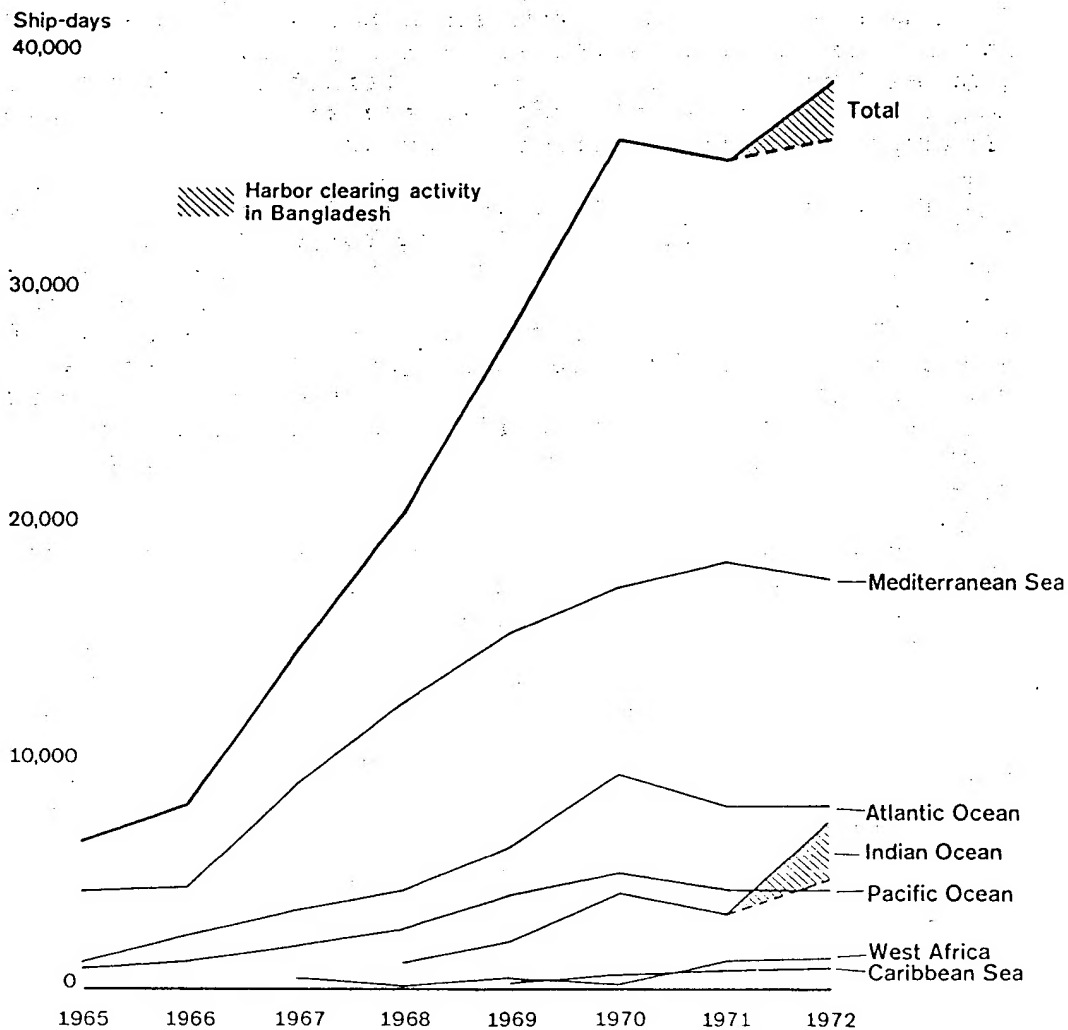
The regional distribution of Soviet naval activity outside home waters also changed during the 1965-1970 period. The Mediterranean Sea's share of Soviet naval activity declined from 66 percent to 48 percent, while the portion of ship-days in the Indian Ocean grew from zero to 10 percent and in the Atlantic, from 19 to 26 percent. Ship-days accumulated in the Pacific Ocean remained nearly constant at about 15 percent of the worldwide total, and operations in the Caribbean Sea and West African waters grew to about 2 percent of the total.

* See Annex for a detailed breakdown of levels and trends of ship-days since 1965.

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Operations of Soviet General Purpose Naval Forces Outside Home Waters, 1965-1972 *



* Excludes ballistic missile submarine, hydrographic research, and space support ship activity.

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Period of Stabilization: 1971-1972

In 1971 a period of stabilization in Soviet naval deployments outside home waters began. Soviet activity in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean areas measured in terms of ship-days has declined or has been relatively stable for two years. Activity in the Caribbean and West African waters has shown some increase, but this does not significantly affect the general trend. These trends are illustrated in the chart on page 7, which reflects the statistical detail presented in the annex to this report.

An exception to this overall stabilization occurred in the Indian Ocean, where the number of ship-days--excluding the atypical harbor clearing activity in Bangladesh--rose from about 3,150 in 1971 to 4,630 in 1972. This rise was due mainly to the augmentation of Soviet forces in that area during the India-Pakistan war. Soviet units engaged in the harbor clearing operations in Bangladesh--primarily small coastal mine-sweepers and diving support craft--expended roughly 2,500 ship-days in 1972.

Variations in the time that deployed Soviet ships spend at anchor or in port limit the extent to which ship-day totals can be taken as direct indicators of levels of Soviet naval operations. For example, Soviet combatants and naval auxiliaries worldwide spend only 35 percent of their deployed time under way, whereas attack submarines spend over 80 percent. Surface ships in the Mediterranean Sea spend only a quarter of their time under way, whereas those in the Atlantic* and Pacific are under way almost constantly.

Soviet Naval Objectives

The 38,230 ship-days accrued by deployed Soviet naval units in 1972 were in support of two main

* *Excluding Caribbean Sea and West African operations.*

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objectives: defense of the USSR against Western naval forces, and the extension of Soviet political influence. Soviet naval activity in the North Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the northwestern Pacific is related to defense, whereas Soviet task groups routinely in waters more distant from the USSR--the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters--are tailored for a political role and most have low military capabilities against modern navies.

Defense Against Western Navies

Operations in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean regions, where the primary mission is defense against Western navies, accounted for three-fourths of the total of 38,230 ship-days in 1972. In the portions of these areas nearest the USSR, the Soviets deploy their newest and best equipped ships and react to the presence of Western naval task forces by attempting to track them continuously and by simulating tactical strikes against them. The Soviets usually conduct one large exercise each year in the Norwegian Sea and another in the northwestern Pacific. These exercises emphasize defense against naval penetration of home fleet waters. Smaller scale exercises take place in the Mediterranean Sea, primarily in its eastern half, on almost a monthly basis.

Atlantic. Soviet naval operations in the Atlantic Ocean--excluding the Caribbean and West African waters--accounted for about 20 percent of the total ship-days in 1972. A large segment of these operations--roughly half the surface combatant and submarine activity--was taken up by transits of units between Northern Fleet ports and the Mediterranean or Caribbean Seas. The remaining surface combatant and submarine activity consisted of barrier patrols at the entrances of the Baltic and Barents Seas, exercises in the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea, and surveillance of US and NATO forces, including Polaris submarines at Holy Loch, Scotland, and Rota, Spain.

Naval auxiliary ship operations in the Atlantic--which totaled about 3,950 ship-days in 1972--were

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about evenly divided between direct support of other naval activity and intelligence ship deployments.

Pacific. Ships of the Pacific Ocean Fleet, which were deployed for about 4,070 ship-days in 1972, operate in a pattern similar to that of Soviet ships in the Atlantic. Surface combatant activity consists primarily of transits to and from the Indian Ocean and patrols in the southern entrance to the Sea of Japan. There are occasional special deployments such as those of three major combatants and three submarines from Petropavlovsk to the Gulf of Alaska and then to Hawaiian waters in 1971. Half the Pacific Ocean Fleet submarine operations are patrols in the Philippine Sea, and the remainder are exercises and Indian Ocean transits.

Naval auxiliaries account for about two-thirds of the ship-days of the Pacific Ocean Fleet. More than 40 percent of this auxiliary ship activity is conducted by intelligence ships. Routine submarine rescue ship deployments and tanker operations make up most of the rest.

Mediterranean Sea. Over the past two years, the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron has consisted of 15 to 20 surface combatants, about 12 submarines, and some 20 auxiliaries. In 1971 and 1972 the surface combatant portion of this force included 2 cruisers or large SSM-equipped ships (Sverdlov, Moskva, Kresta, or Kynda class units), 8 to 12 units of destroyer or destroyer-escort size, one or 2 mincraft, and 3 amphibious ships. The submarine contingent included one to 3 nuclear-powered attack submarines--at least one equipped with cruise missiles--and 8 to 10 diesel-powered units.

The squadron is normally supported by 5 or 6 major fleet auxiliaries--a cruise missile support ship, one submarine tender, one or 2 repair ships, and 2 oilers. The remainder of the auxiliaries are miscellaneous smaller units including light cargo ships, merchant tankers, intelligence collectors, tugs, water carriers, and diving tenders. In 1972,

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ship-days in the Mediterranean totaled some 17,340-- about 45 percent of the year's total.

Soviet exercises indicate that the primary war-time mission of the USSR's naval force in the Mediterranean Sea is probably to counter the carriers and submarines of the US Sixth Fleet in waters east of the Straits of Sicily. A secondary mission is the interdiction of NATO shipping.

Each year during the past three years, the Soviets have conducted four or more anticarrier exercises in the Mediterranean Sea involving one or two cruise missile submarines and one or more major surface combatants. Some of these exercises have been controlled by the Main Naval Staff in Moscow, reflecting the USSR's high-level interest in such activity.

Other exercise activity appears to be focused on basic ASW problems. ASW exercises have most frequently employed one to five ships against Soviet target submarines. A few exercises have taken place in which larger numbers of ships formed antisubmarine barriers in waters south of Crete and in the Straits of Sicily. The Soviets have had no success in tracking US ballistic missile submarines.

Mediterranean operations are politically more useful to the Soviets than Atlantic and Pacific naval activity. By providing a counter to the US Sixth Fleet, the Mediterranean Squadron lends credence to the Soviets' self-appointed role as protector of the Arab states in the Middle East. Soviet naval units can be positioned at any point in the eastern Mediterranean Sea within a day's time, giving the USSR the capability of interposing its forces between a client state and an opposing force.

The political role of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron is also evidenced by its program of port calls, occasional joint exercises with littoral states such as Syria, and the presence of a small Soviet amphibious force of roughly 560 naval infantrymen.

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The ouster of the Soviets from Egypt has not resulted in any major changes in Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean. The greatest loss to Moscow was the reconnaissance and strike support capabilities provided by the naval air squadron formerly based there. Egypt has reasserted its control over the port facilities, but Soviet warships still use Alexandria and Port Said on a routine basis, and the Soviets still use Alexandria for overhauling diesel submarines.

The Soviets also appear to be developing some support capabilities in Syria. Soviet warships now routinely call at Tartus and make frequent visits to Latakia.

Extension of Political Influence

Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and West African waters have been tailored primarily for political rather than military missions. The Soviet forces normally deployed to these areas make many port calls but are otherwise largely inactive. Soviet task groups operating in the Indian Ocean and West African waters have been composed mainly of surface ships more than 10 years old and have included few submarines. Surface combatants fitted with long-range ASW sonars or the newer surface-to-air missile systems have been almost completely absent. In the Caribbean, however, where naval deployments are intended to impress Western observers, the Soviets have employed their newer combatants and more submarines.

Indian Ocean

During the past three years the Soviets have maintained a continuous naval presence in the Indian Ocean, typically including one destroyer or cruiser, one or two fleet minesweepers, one amphibious ship, a diesel submarine, and three or four auxiliary support ships. With this nucleus of ships, the Soviets can

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demonstrate their political interest in the area and introduce additional units less provocatively than if no ships were already there.

Goodwill visits are a principal objective of Soviet operations in the Indian Ocean. A trend toward more port visits by warships in the few countries which are most receptive to the Soviet presence--Somalia, South Yemen, and Iraq--has been evident. These three countries accounted for only about 20 of 60 port visits by combatants in the Indian Ocean during 1968 and 1969, but approximately 45 of 65 such visits in 1971 and 1972.

During periods of tension, Soviet ships support countries friendly to the USSR. The presence of Soviet warships in Somali ports for periods of several weeks at various times during the past few years may have helped to bolster the Somali regime. The stationing of ships in the Bay of Bengal during the India-Pakistan War was a visible aspect of the USSR's support for India in that conflict.

One of the few Soviet military uses of the Indian Ocean has been that of transferring ships between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Even this role has been limited, however, for only one-fourth of the Soviet surface combatants and submarines that have entered the area have been on transits between fleets.

To facilitate their support of Indian Ocean operations the Soviets recently made arrangements to improve the port facilities in Berbera, Somalia, and to conduct routine maintenance there. A Soviet naval communications station which was established near Berbera in December 1972 should improve communications between Soviet naval headquarters in Moscow and ships in the Indian Ocean. The Soviets have also sought the use of Iraqi facilities at Umm Qasr on the Persian Gulf.

Caribbean Sea

The Soviet naval presence in the Caribbean Sea has been small and discontinuous but has included

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the USSR's more modern units. During the past three years, when Soviet ships accrued an average of 780 ship-days per year in the area, surface combatants and submarines were present less than 20 percent of the time. Nearly all the combatants were less than 10 years old.

Two political objectives have been evident in most of the Soviet naval operations in the Caribbean Sea--improvement of Soviet-Cuban relations and testing of US reactions to the Soviet naval presence.

The object of improved relations with Cuba was particularly evident during the USSR's first naval deployment to the Caribbean in 1969. Port calls coincided with Cuba's annual 26th of July celebrations, and Soviet ships and sailors participated in Cuban ceremonies throughout their stay. The task group which supported this diplomatic activity included more major surface units than any subsequent Caribbean deployment.

In their Caribbean exercise activity, Soviet naval units have played primarily a military assistance role. Ships involved in the three longest Soviet deployments to the Caribbean devoted nearly all their at-sea time to training the Cuban Navy in the use of naval equipment provided by the USSR.

The Soviets have experimented with the use of Cuban ports for submarine support in a manner which indicates an intent to test US reactions to their presence. In the late summer of 1970 nuclear support barges and submarine nets were positioned in Cienfuegos harbor and recreational facilities were built on an island in the bay. No nuclear submarines visited Cienfuegos until February 1971, however. An anchorage in the Bay of Nipe was used briefly for repair work on a diesel submarine during December 1970 and was used again during May 1971 when an E-II class nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine and a submarine tender tied up together there for seven days. The most recent submarine activity in the Bay of Nipe involved a G-II class ballistic missile submarine and a submarine tender that moored there for a week during April and May 1972.

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The visit of the G-II to Cuba has been the only port call of a Soviet ballistic missile submarine outside the USSR.

The Soviets station a rescue tug in or near Cuba to provide emergency assistance to submarines in the eastern Atlantic. Rescue tugs have accounted for over 40 percent of the Soviet naval ship-days accrued in the Caribbean Sea since September 1970.

West Africa

Prior to November 1970, Soviet naval activity in West African waters consisted only of an experimental submarine support operation, two submarine-associated research expeditions, 12 transits to the Indian Ocean, and a show of force off Ghana in March 1968. In the Ghanaian operation, a four-unit task group was deployed to West African waters in support of diplomatic efforts to obtain the release of two Soviet fishing boats and their crews which had been seized by Ghana the previous fall.

In November 1970 the Soviets responded to Guinean President Sekou Toure's request for protection from raids by Portuguese-backed Guinean exiles by instituting a naval patrol near the Guinean coast. Since its inception the Guinea patrol has been virtually continuous, averaging one to two combatants and one support ship.

The Soviets evidently have only political purposes in maintaining a naval force near Guinea. There are no indications that the Soviet ships engaged in the Guinea patrol have conducted any exercises or tests while in West African waters or served any military purpose useful to the Soviets.

West African logistic support has been useful but probably not essential to Soviet ships transiting to the Indian Ocean. During the past three years roughly one-third of the Soviet naval units en route to or from the Indian Ocean have stopped in West African ports.

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Limitations on Routine Activity
Outside Soviet Home Waters

There are indications that fiscal and logistic limitations affect the pace of routine Soviet naval activity. The current leveling-off in Soviet deployments as a whole and some shorter term variations in activity levels within fleets may reflect these constraints.

Economic Restrictions

The propagandized 1972 pledge of a Northern Fleet submarine crew to "save state funds through competent use of equipment, extension of equipment service life, efficient consumption of fuel and electric power, and a thrifty attitude toward uniforms and special clothing" is indicative of a Soviet policy decision to stress operating economy. Such a decision reflects a consciousness of limitations on the availability of operating funds. This consciousness could be expected in the Soviet Navy, since its active general purpose forces* received less than nine percent of the USSR's defense expenditures in 1972, and almost half of this money was absorbed by the procurement of ships and weapons systems and the construction of shore facilities.

Logistic Support Limitations

The modest tempo of activity by deployed Soviet naval forces may reflect logistic support limitations.

* Including the naval infantry, naval aviation, coastal defense forces, and shore support.

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Roughly two-thirds of the Soviet surface combatants and auxiliaries operating outside Soviet home waters--excluding intelligence ships--are usually in port or at anchor. This low level of activity minimizes Soviet needs for fuel, spare parts, munitions, and maintenance support. The design of Soviet combatants, the small force of major support ships, and the lack of world-wide basing facilities are weak elements in the Soviet Navy's logistic structure. ✓

Combatant Design. Soviet combatants are designed with emphases on speed and armament at the expense of range and endurance. They have marginal capabilities for underway replenishment and limited or no reloads for major weapon systems. Moreover, Soviet ships have relatively small crews with limited capabilities for self-repair of shipboard systems.

Support Ships. The major elements in the Soviet naval auxiliary fleet are its 24 fleet oilers, 16 submarine tenders, 23 oceangoing repair ships, and six cruise missile support units. With the exception of the oilers, these ships are relatively small--less than one-third the size of their US counterparts.

The Soviets have recently constructed two new types of replenishment ships that are designed to transfer fuel and dry stores while under way alongside the receiving ship. These types of ships could enable small Soviet task groups to operate for longer periods on the open oceans with less dependence on fair weather for replenishment. Other Soviet auxiliaries can transfer dry stores only at anchor and are unable to refuel combatants unless they are nearly motionless in calm water with hoses over the bow or stern.

Over the past four years the USSR's use of merchant ships for fleet support has grown from less than 500 ship-days per year to approximately 2,500 ship-days. This increased use of nonnaval shipping probably

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reflects both the USSR's shortage of naval auxiliaries and a policy of preparing the Soviet merchant marine for contingency naval support. During the India-Pakistan war, for example, two civil tankers were diverted to supply the Soviet naval force in the Indian Ocean.

Basing. No Soviet combatants are based outside the Warsaw Pact, and there are no Soviet naval shore establishments, other than communications relay stations, in any foreign countries outside the Pact. Soviet naval units do have regular access to port facilities in Egypt, Somalia, Cuba, Syria, Iraq, and Guinea, however.

To overcome their lack of foreign bases the Soviets have used floating bases--collections of auxiliary ships responsible for the maintenance and replenishment of out-of-area combatant forces. These floating bases can accomplish their missions at anchorages in international waters or in foreign harbors.

The use of floating bases minimizes the political problems associated with out-of-area operations, but does not provide drydocking facilities for hull repair and in most cases does not permit resupply by aircraft. When auxiliary ship support takes place in an anchorage, the units are usually vulnerable to bad weather and the crews do not have opportunities for rest and recreation.

Operational Reflections of Resource Limitations

Variations in routine Soviet deployment levels indicate that resource constraints may affect the availability of ships for deployment. As an example, the activity of the Pacific Ocean Fleet was at an abnormally low level for five months following its support of unexpected deployments to the Indian Ocean and South China Sea between December 1971 and June 1972. For nearly five months following the return of

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the Soviet combatant task force from the South China Sea, there were no other out-of-area deployments by major combatants of the Pacific Ocean Fleet. The fleet's annual defensive exercise, which had been held each fall during recent years, did not take place in 1972.

When possible, the Soviets have responded to new requirements for ships in distant areas by utilizing forces already deployed. The Soviets formed what has become the Guinea patrol by detaching two destroyers from their Mediterranean Squadron. During the India-Pakistan War the Soviet ships in the Indian Ocean which had been relieved at the end of their six-month deployments remained in the area until the crisis had passed.

Limitations on submarine operating resources could explain what may be a tradeoff between strategic and general purpose submarine operations. Since 1970 Soviet ballistic missile submarine operations have risen by more than 1,100 ship-days per year, but the previously rapid growth in general purpose submarine operations has stopped.

Quick-Response Capabilities

Despite any constraints on routine operations, the Soviets have demonstrated a quick-response capability during four periods of political tension since 1967. In none of these instances was the USSR directly threatened. The more recent of these deployments indicate that the Soviets have certain general purpose ships on alert for quick reaction.

- The first and largest force buildup was that of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron during the period surrounding the Arab-Israeli War in 1967. It began in May and lasted through July of 1967 and resulted in the addition of eight submarines and 13 combatants and sup-

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port ships. Previously the Mediterranean Squadron had averaged about two to three submarines and four surface combatants.

- In September 1970, a crisis developed in Jordan and the Soviets again sent additional units to the Mediterranean. As was the case with the Arab-Israeli War in 1967, most of the major combatants and submarines were in the Mediterranean before the hostilities began, but two Northern Fleet submarines and three Black Sea Fleet surface combatants were added. The additional combatants left their home ports over a 12-day period and made unhurried transits to the Mediterranean.

Since December 1971, there have been two deployments which indicate that the Soviets probably maintain small "duty forces" in readiness for sudden deployments.

- During the India-Pakistan War in December 1971, the first ships of a Soviet task group started for the Bay of Bengal after a standby period of probably 24 to 48 hours. A total of three Soviet surface combatants, four submarines, and four auxiliary ships eventually left Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk. The lead ship in the group, a Kynda class cruiser, steamed at an average speed of nearly 28 knots and reached the Straits of Malacca in nine days. The last group of ships to reach the Indian Ocean included a submarine tender and two submarines and took three weeks to complete the trip.
- The most recent example was in May 1972 when a Soviet naval task force was sent to the South China Sea in a response to the US mining of North Vietnamese ports. The three surface combatants and probably the four submarines which eventually were deployed to

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the area were under way within about a day after President Nixon's speech was broadcast. Six days later the surface combatants arrived at a point near the entrance to the Gulf of Tonkin and rendezvoused with six other combatant and auxiliary ships which had interrupted their transits to or from the Indian Ocean to loiter in the area. During the one to five weeks the Soviet units were in the Gulf of Tonkin area they were almost totally inactive.

Outlook

Analysis of the USSR's naval construction programs, its prospects for increased access to foreign ports, and Soviet statements on naval operations indicates that the Soviets do not intend to expand the level of operations of their general purpose naval forces at the rate of the late Sixties. They do intend to improve their capabilities to conduct naval operations in distant areas, however.

Newer Ships

Soviet capabilities for distant naval operations will gradually be increased as a result of ongoing construction programs. Larger ships with greater cruising ranges and better capabilities for self-defense are being built. Two examples are an aircraft carrier which was recently launched in the Black Sea and the Kara class cruiser which made its initial deployment to the Mediterranean Sea in March 1973. Replenishment ships are not being produced with any urgency (one or two per year), even though they would ease Soviet support operations in distant areas. Although

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amphibious landing ships are elements of the USSR's naval presence in distant areas, the Soviets are expanding their Alligator force--currently 11 units--at a rate of only one unit per year.

In addition to construction activity, the Soviets recently modified two Sverdlov class light cruisers, probably for seaborne command center roles. These ships demonstrated extensive communications capabilities in their first postmodification deployments, one of which was to the Indian Ocean, and will improve the Soviet Navy's ability to control distant operations.

Limited Shore Support

The Soviets are working to increase their port usage rights although their prospects for much success are limited. During the past two years the Soviets have made inroads by initiating routine auxiliary ship support work in Berbera, Somalia, and Tartus, Syria--exchanging increased military aid for harbor access in each case. They may have tried unsuccessfully to conclude a port rights agreement with Guinea as well and may attempt to use their harbor clearing operations in Bangladesh to bargain for harbor rights there. Other countries possessing good harbors and some diplomatic ties to the USSR--such as India and Algeria--have not been interested in permitting Soviet warships to use their ports for support operations.

Continued Political Missions in Distant Areas

The comments of Soviet naval officers such as Admiral Kasatonov, deputy commander in chief of the Soviet Navy, on distant naval operations reflect pride in the USSR's new-found ability to conduct these operations and a growing awareness of their political utility. Political roles have been expressed primarily in terms of the Soviet Navy's ability to protect the "state interests" of the USSR around the world. The use of the Soviet Navy to strengthen ties with friendly socialist states and

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to end the domination of the seas by the British and American navies fits with the rationale of protecting the USSR's "state interests" as a global power.

Since 1968 the Soviet Navy's accomplishments as a goodwill ambassador have been praised by naval leaders, including Admiral Gorshkov. The fact that Soviet naval units visited 60 countries during the past three years was mentioned in every major Soviet Navy Day address in 1972.

If the protection of "state interests" and the accomplishment of goodwill missions are in fact the primary motivating forces behind distant Soviet naval operations, future "long cruise" deployment patterns will follow foreign policy shifts as the USSR seeks political influence in various parts of the world.

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Annex

Soviet General Purpose Naval Force Deployments Outside Home Waters
1965-1972

| | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | Ship-days 1972 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Mediterranean</u> | <u>4,007</u> | <u>4,314</u> | <u>8,663</u> | <u>12,157</u> | <u>15,153</u> | <u>17,055</u> | <u>18,112</u> | <u>17,336</u> |
| Surface combatants | 758 | 1,321 | 3,309 | 4,758 | 5,789 | 6,181 | 6,291 | 5,527 |
| Submarines | 800 | 900 | 1,924 | 2,973 | 4,064 | 4,069 | 4,016 | 4,853 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 2,449 | 2,093 | 3,430 | 4,426 | 5,300 | 6,805 | 7,805 | 6,956 |
| <u>Atlantic Ocean</u> | <u>1,150</u> | <u>2,320</u> | <u>3,349</u> | <u>4,201</u> | <u>6,065</u> | <u>9,129</u> | <u>7,871</u> | <u>7,555</u> |
| Surface combatants | 100 | 130 | 71 | 433 | 702 | 1,443 | 1,086 | 1,276 |
| Submarines | 900 | 1,700 | 1,982 | 2,321 | 3,064 | 3,738 | 2,956 | 2,330 |
| Naval Auxiliaries | 150 | 490 | 1,296 | 1,447 | 2,299 | 3,948 | 3,829 | 3,949 |
| <u>Pacific Ocean</u> | <u>915</u> | <u>1,220</u> | <u>1,875</u> | <u>2,567</u> | <u>4,001</u> | <u>4,902</u> | <u>4,122</u> | <u>4,073</u> |
| Surface combatants | 115 | 150 | 109 | 226 | 219 | 448 | 618 | 597 |
| Submarines | 700 | 900 | 727 | 956 | 1,195 | 1,115 | 883 | 642 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 100 | 170 | 1,039 | 1,385 | 2,587 | 3,339 | 2,621 | 2,834 |
| <u>Indian Ocean</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>1,106</u> | <u>2,022</u> | <u>3,726</u> | <u>3,149</u> | <u>7,096^a</u> |
| Surface combatants | 0 | 0 | 0 | 403 | 828 | 1,085 | 1,319 | 2,654 |
| Submarines | 0 | 0 | 0 | 160 | 310 | 594 | 169 | 847 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 0 | 0 | 0 | 543 | 884 | 2,047 | 1,661 | 3,595 |
| <u>West Africa</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>435</u> | <u>133</u> | <u>347</u> | <u>201</u> | <u>1,114</u> | <u>1,260</u> |
| Surface combatants | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 152 | 90 | 613 | 669 |
| Submarines | 0 | 0 | 228 | 22 | 104 | 25 | 53 | 38 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 0 | 0 | 207 | 90 | 91 | 86 | 448 | 553 |
| <u>Caribbean Sea</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>254</u> | <u>605</u> | <u>820</u> | <u>911</u> |
| Surface combatants | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 87 | 111 | 239 | 168 |
| Submarines | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 91 | 77 | 125 | 168 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 76 | 417 ^b | 456 ^b | 575 ^b |
| <u>Totals by Force</u> | <u>6,072</u> | <u>7,854</u> | <u>14,322</u> | <u>20,164</u> | <u>27,842</u> | <u>35,618</u> | <u>35,188</u> | <u>38,231^a</u> |
| Surface combatants | 973 | 1,601 | 3,489 | 5,841 | 7,777 | 9,358 | 10,166 | 10,891 |
| Submarines | 2,400 | 3,500 | 4,861 | 6,432 | 8,828 | 9,618 | 8,202 | 8,878 |
| Naval auxiliaries | 2,699 | 2,753 | 5,972 | 7,891 | 11,237 | 16,642 | 16,820 | 18,462 |

Note: General purpose force deployments do not include ballistic missile submarine, oceanographic, and space support operations. Data reflect observed deployments. Covert deployments could introduce an error of as much as 5 percent in the data for submarines.

a. These data include harbor clearing operations in Bangladesh, which amounted to some 2,450 ship-days in 1972: about 1,000 for surface ships and 1,450 for naval auxiliaries. If these atypical operations are excluded, total general purpose force deployments for 1972 amount to about 35,800 ship-days.

b. Including noncombatant rescue tugs stationed in Cuba since September 1970.

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